

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 700

To increase the number of operational aircraft carriers of the Navy, and  
for other purposes.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 22, 2019

Mr. CONAWAY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the  
Committee on Armed Services

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## A BILL

To increase the number of operational aircraft carriers of  
the Navy, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “12 Carrier Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) The aircraft carrier can fulfill the Navy’s  
8 core missions of forward presence, sea control, en-  
9 suring safe sea lanes, and power projection as well

1 as providing flexibility and versatility to execute a  
2 wide range of additional missions.

3 (2) Forward airpower is integral to the security  
4 and joint forces operations of the United States.  
5 Carriers play a central role in delivering forward air-  
6 power from sovereign territory of the United States  
7 in both permissive and nonpermissive environments.

8 (3) Aircraft carriers provide our Nation the  
9 ability to rapidly and decisively respond to national  
10 threats, as well as conducting worldwide, on-station  
11 diplomacy and providing deterrence against threats  
12 to the United States allies, partners, and friends.

13 (4) Since the end of the cold war, aircraft car-  
14 rier deployments have increased while the aircraft  
15 carrier force structure has declined.

16 (5) Considering the increased array of complex  
17 threats across the globe, the Navy aircraft carrier is  
18 operating at maximum capacity, increasing deploy-  
19 ment lengths and decreasing maintenance periods in  
20 order to meet operational requirements.

21 (6) To meet global peacetime and wartime re-  
22 quirements, the Navy has indicated a requirement to  
23 maintain two aircraft carriers deployed overseas and  
24 have three additional aircraft carriers capable of de-  
25 ploying within 90 days. However, the Navy has indi-

1 cated that the existing aircraft carrier force struc-  
2 ture cannot support these military requirements.

3 (7) Despite the requirement to maintain an air-  
4 craft carrier strike group in both the United States  
5 Central Command and United States Pacific Com-  
6 mand, the Navy has been unable to generate suffi-  
7 cient capacity to support our combatant com-  
8 manders and has developed significant carrier gaps  
9 in these critical areas.

10 (8) Because of continuing use of a diminished  
11 aircraft carrier force structure, extensive mainte-  
12 nance availabilities result which typically exceed pro-  
13 gram costs and increase time in shipyards. These ex-  
14 pensive maintenance availabilities exacerbate exist-  
15 ing carrier gaps.

16 (9) Because of maintenance overhaul exten-  
17 sions, the Navy is truncating basic aircraft carrier  
18 training to expedite the deployment of available air-  
19 craft carriers. Limiting aircraft carrier training de-  
20 creases operational capabilities and increases sailor  
21 risk.

22 (10) The Navy has adopted a two-phase acqui-  
23 sition strategy for the U.S.S. John F. Kennedy  
24 (CVN-79), an action that will delay the introduction

1 of this aircraft carrier by up to two years, exacer-  
2 bating existing carrier gaps.

3 (11) Developing an alternative design to the  
4 Ford-class aircraft carrier is not cost beneficial. A  
5 smaller design is projected to incur significant de-  
6 sign and engineering cost while significantly reduc-  
7 ing magazine size, carrier air wing size, sortie rate,  
8 and on-station effectiveness among other vital fac-  
9 tors when compared to the Ford class. Furthermore,  
10 a new design will delay the introduction of future  
11 aircraft carriers, exacerbating existing carrier gaps  
12 and threatening the national security of the United  
13 States.

14 **SEC. 3. INCREASE IN NUMBER OF OPERATIONAL AIRCRAFT**  
15 **CARRIERS OF THE NAVY.**

16 (a) INCREASE.—Section 8062(b) of title 10, United  
17 States Code, is amended by striking “11 operational air-  
18 craft carriers” and inserting “12 operational aircraft car-  
19 riers”.

20 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
21 subsection (a) shall take effect on September 30, 2023.

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